

Lake Kawaguchiko: Museums and Galleries

Lake Kawaguchiko is almost as shallow as Lake Yamanakako, just 14.6 meters at its deepest point, and is another popular destination for aquatic sports. Its name means “Mouth of the Rivers,” and no less than six mountain streams flow into it. The lake’s northeast shore in particular has many museums and art galleries, all accessible by bus. Kawaguchiko-ohashi Bridge, the only bridge in the Fuji Five Lakes, connects Cape Ubuyagasaki on the north side to Kawaguchiko Herb Hall to the south.

The lake’s east-west orientation means Mt. Fuji can be admired from many different points along the north shore. Cape Ubuyagasaki has been renowned for centuries as one of the best places to see the stunning “Upside-down Fuji” (*sakasafuji*) reflected in the lake when the waters are still. Numerous stone monuments have been erected in the area to artists who immortalized the region in their work, including photographer Okada Koyo, haiku poet Basho, and writer Nakamura Seiko.

History and Folklore

Northeast of the lake is Kawaguchi Asama-jinja Shrine, founded to appease Mt. Fuji after the Jogan Eruption of 864. The shrine’s location was likely chosen to avoid lava flows from subsequent volcanic events, as the entire area south of the lake consists of igneous rock from the eruption.

Another notable shrine can be found on Unoshima, the only island in any of the Five Lakes, located roughly at the center of Lake Kawaguchiko. This shrine honors Benzaiten, the Japanese goddess of music, flowing water, and love, who occasionally appears in the folklore of other shrines nearby.